

Pack Library Oral History Project

Stafford and Wynn Anders

Interviewers: Peggy Gardner, Mary Parker and Jo Parker

February 16, 2001²

Side A

Peggy Gardner (PG): We're at 95 Charlotte Street, my name is Peggy Gardner, we're here with Mary Parker, who lives at this house, her family home, and Stafford and Wynn Anders, Stafford also grew up in this neighborhood. This is the first of a series of tapes for Pack library, that Mary Parker has agreed to do some oral history interviews for us. A little glimpse of our year 2000 and a looking back at the previous – as far back as we can remember.

Mary Parker (MP): Well I am ten or fifteen years older than Stafford so my memories of growing up are from a slightly - a half-a-generation earlier. I was born in 1914 and I can remember how things were in the twenties here when Stafford was born in the mid-to-late twenties –

Stafford Anders (SA): I was born in '23.

MP: '23?

SA: Yes – you're not much older than me.

MP: Did you live in the place on Hollywood Street when you were very young?

SA: I was born in Mission Hospital and –

MP: And by that time it was the Mission Hospital whose present building is the Parkway Office Building.

SA: Exactly.

MP: It was the hospital then. So we had that in the neighborhood.

SA: And my grandfather built the house that all his children lived in up on Hollywood Street. Then my mother died when I was 21 months old, so I was reared by my aunt there on Hollywood Street, with my grandparents. I still live there in the old house.

MP: When we were growing up there was no expressway, there wasn't even the tunnel.

SA: I remember when they were blasting it.

MP: There was no urban renewal area. There was the town, the square, College street did have shops on it, but still had private homes on it – within a block of the square. The First Baptist Church was on the corner of I think, Spruce and College, when I was very young. And College Street itself was so called because it came past the area that we knew as the David Millard School (?) but 100 years ago, 140 years ago was the site of the Asheville Female Academy. College Street wound around past that and then up towards the mountain. All in between was a mixture of residences, some big, some small, some people with big yards and some with small

ones. Over the hill south was Valley Street, Mountain Street, Hildebran and Poplar which were traditionally black neighborhoods. They sort of came together perfectly amicably around the edge of Poplar and College.

SA: Well College, Phyllis Wheatly YWCA, the black Y, was at the end of Hollywood, the street I grew up on and it ran into College.

MP: Did Hollywood end at College?

SA: Yes it did in those days. It was just a short street. And when Grandpa built that house he was the only one in that vicinity besides a brick house that later was part of Phyllis Wheatly, on the corner of College and Hollywood.

PG: Stafford can you tell me your grandfather's names and your aunt's name?

SA: George W. Clement (?). He was the building inspector for years. He came here to work on the Estate. He was from Davie County. My aunt's name is Nancy Clement. They first lived in Biltmore when they came here. Aunt Nancy was one of the carvers for the Biltmore Industries -- kind of a patron of Edith Vanderbilt. There's a little museum down there and they have lots of stuff from mother's clothes --

MP: Was Latta Clement your uncle?

SA: Yes.

MP: His business was always related to Biltmore Village.

SA: Yes. He was out on West Chapel Road then. That was the boondocks -- we used to go out to the farm.

(100)MP: But College Street as it exists today did not exist. At the corner -- the top of Valley Street and corner of College and Oak -- it curved to go back, in our time, the David Millard High School -- and a street that went toward the mountain was Poplar Street.

SA: Well Poplar ran straight on towards the mountain.

MP: And College just sort of wandered.

SA: Well College was just a gorgeous street. The old Lusk place.

MP: Right Col. Lusk's house. Col. Lusk was a legendary Republican.

SA: That's all right (someone) wasn't and he was a lawyer, he was his grandson. I knew him well, he married a Shuford.

MP: Mary Jane?

SA: Yes. But the houses across from that great old house, and it was so great, and the big yards -- we a series of the little Victorian houses -- they were just darling.
(were)

MP: That was called College Place. Or College Park or something. When the tunnel was built -- I'm surprised you remember that.

SA: I remember it because Aunt Nancy always said that it shook the house and it always rattled some after that.

MP: But the tunnel did not disrupt the neighborhood as much as the later changes.

SA: Well the other one fixed me. Took my side lawns and my neighbors and everything.

MP: Really the big changes came with the cross town expressway. That was – to my notion – 1960.

SA: Well it wiped out that whole area of the cute little Victorian houses and the some that weren't so – and the Montieth's lived up there – they had been for years and years – got their house. They left us cuddled up against the bank there and took the end of the neighborhood that I knew.

MP: And it also kept going and wiped out Woodfin Street for all practical purposes on which there had been an interesting row of houses, including the site of Thomas Wolfe's father's house.

SA: I have pictures of the trees above the house. I don't have pictures of the house. I have a lot of the bricks. Every time I went home that way, walked home sometimes, and my son always did from school, we picked up a couple of bricks. For a while I knew I had bricks from the room that Tom was born in, now I got them kind of mixed up so I'm not sure which were from the actual room he was born in – but I have them from the house.

MP: Now that's kind of interesting. You talk about walking home from school – that would have been in the thirties. This is where there's this generation gap between me and Stafford.

SA: A few years will make a difference. I have a cousin who sent me a picture recently and said "Who are these people?" of course they're her relatives too. She doesn't remember them, I do.

MP: Well the thing is, what I was thinking about, when I walked home from school no one gave a tinker's dam about Tom Wolfe except Mrs. Roberts and the people who were teaching him. *Look Homeward Angel* came out after I was through high school.

SA: Well I remember when it came out because Aunt Nancy made a big deal about it. And my Uncle Dewitt who was with Tom, and is credited with telling him how to collect for the paper over on Poplar Street, he came home immediately and said "My God I hear that Tom's written a book. Where is it?" Aunt Nancy said "Well I have it right here" and it was an autographed copy. Wolfe died in '38 – but I knew his mother real well and his sister Mabel –well, Helen he calls her in the book. We used to go down and talk to Mrs. Wolfe.

MP: She was living in the house – The Thomas Wolfe house?

SA: Yes, that one there.

MP: She was quite a character.

SA: I think she was. She was awfully kind to a bunch of – well I was teenager then, you know. And Wilma Dykeman had started writing short stories – of course they lived out in Beaverdam.

Wynn Anders (WA): The bricks that we picked up we picked up in the 60s when they tore the house down. David and Stafford – she was working, he was going to school. As they'd come back on that street, they'd pick up a brick – two or three bricks.

SA: I got a stack of bricks still in the basement. I've given them to worth people –

PG: Deserving people.

SA: Yes, out at Flat Rock –

MP: So you've got that kind of capital stashed away.

SA: Yes, well I've got some letters too.

PG: My mother went and got bricks when they tore down David Millard so each of her children. So we each have a brick from David Millard.

MP: That was a good building.

SA: I talked with a person who was instrumental in tearing it down, maybe the contractor or what ever it was. He said that building would have stood 100 years.

MP: Tony Lord's father was the architect of that building.

PW: He did a lot of the schools.

SA: David Millard was one time mayor of Asheville right? That's were they got the name.

MP: I believe he was. He was Ralph Millard, Charleton Millard brother. They said Ralph's wife preferred for it to be Mill-ARD.

SA: Well I used to know somebody named George Rummage and she was Mrs. Rum-MAGE. I could understand that – I don't think there's any mystery.

(200)MP: No harm in that. When Furman Avenue as far as either College or Poplar, had been originally Pine and was renamed Furman, as then from south of there it was Pine Street and that crossed to

SA: When Woodfin came into College there, Dr. Holt's house was on the end there. And then Rita B. Lee's house –

MP: I was going to say, Dr. Holt and then Rita Lee and around the corner –

SA: And the Book Store, the neighborhood store.

MP: And when she says "the Book Store" it was a family named Book that had a neighborhood grocery.

SA: I grew up in their house practically.

MP: And Dr. Holt and Mrs. Lee were outstanding black citizens whose residences were there and around the corner were two, maybe three black churches. Hopkins Chapel –

SA: Still standing.

MP: Berry Temple –

SA: Still standing.

MP: And...maybe those were the only churches.

SA: I think those were the only churches.

MP: The Phyllis Wheatly YWCA was there.

SA: Yes. But then the Allen Home, (X?) that great big school was on the same side as Hopkins Chapel is now.

MP: Oh of course. Many of those buildings are still in use as an office park now. And that was a school for girls run by the northern Presbyterian Church – I believe financed – but for black girls and they were very carefully brought up. I remember seeing them going out for a walk, rather almost like we did from Saint Mary's in Raleigh – two by two. And you weren't supposed – and I bet it was the same with them - to speak to anybody on the street. If you passed them, even if you knew them, which, maybe they weren't bringing up the girls at the Allen School -]

SA: Well I didn't think it was that drastic 'cause I passed them almost every day going to and from town –

MP: And said "How do you do?" I don't know, at St. Mary's we especially weren't supposed to speak to a boy. Anyway it was a very good school and very –

SA: Most of the teachers were white, and in those days most of them came from the north.

(unintelligible)

MP: The retirement home – Brooks-Howell. In fact, Brooks-Howell is a Methodist, a retirement home for Methodist deaconesses and in the course of it's history I think many of the people associated with Allen School have been there. They said one problem at Brooks Howell is that they were all chiefs, they were all used to being executives and bosses and in retirement it was kind of rough all living together.

SA: We're very familiar with that situation. I have an aunt who used to be in charge of a big hospital in Birmingham, my mother's oldest sister. And when she retired and came back to Asheville to the old house – I think at one time she had several hundred people under her, she was a big cheese, and when she came home she used the same amount of energy on three of us, and it had been three hundred. She didn't let up.

MP: Have you lived in the Hollywood street house, has that been your residence pretty much continuously?

SA: Well I married Dr. Edmond Jackson, my first husband and we were gone during the war. I followed the fleet. My son was born in Selma, Alabama – we were all over the United States. I came home after that, my son was raised in there in the old house.

PG: What year did you come back?

SA: What year would it be? David was fairly small. He was born in '42 – about '44.

MP: So you brought up your children up there.

SA: Yes. I just had the one son. He was reared there.

MP: Did you notice when you first came back after being away during the war, were you conscious of – did the neighborhood seem the same?

SA: Oh no. I was very upset about what happened to some of the darling little houses on College Street. They were still there – there were fewer of them. Woodfin had been fairly well devastated as you were saying there used to be houses along there. And your own Charlotte Street, you know where that highway goes under the bridge there as you turn at the filling station, there used to be a house there – do you know who those people were?

MP: I don't remember

SA: Dr. Purefoy had a house right there.

MP: Dr. Purefoy's house was next to the hospital. It was up on the hill.

(Cross Talk)

WA: I remember that marvelous building used to be where that parking lot is, right across from you, it had the balcony up on top?

MP: Wasn't that the Revel building?

SA: Looked like New Orleans.

(300)MP: That was part of the Revel estate. I think where the art shop is now – which was in our day mostly – longest time it was a drug store, all were part of the Revel estate, and then that changed – well the Revel house was there longer, but in between the King James Apartment was built in the early thirties. It had shops on the ground floor, which I thought was kind of cool.

SA: Between those two remember, there was a clapboard house, an old two story? Some guy who sold rugs, that was his house – and then the one with the balconies.

MP: That one I remember because it was sort of across from the exit of our driveway.

SA: The saddest thing that's happened to this neighborhood is taking down the Westall house. It was in such wonderful shape and it was so beautiful.

PG: Where was that?

SA: It was where Fuddrucker's is.

MP: Well the far end of that because there were two other houses.

SA: There was house on the grounds that I think had been a tenet^h house or something that was a darling little cottage. And the back was a coach house with the water that ran through it all the time. I wonder what they did with that stream?

MP: Well you know there are a number of underground streams around and about that will maybe someday rise up to haunt people because of changes they make. I didn't know about that one.

SA: Speaking of haunting, are you familiar with Overlook Bridge up at Zelandia, the Castle?

MP: I know where of you speak.

SA: Have you read the book on Haunted Asheville.

MP: No you didn't recommend it.

SA: Well I got all excited about it. I was reared in this neighborhood and I'm closer to the bridge than you all are. I knew every family that was near there which wasn't many. In those days there were just two houses up above the tunnel there. Dr. Miller's house was there, the Monteith's, the Roger's had a big house up there, Zelandia and this story about somebody hanging themselves up there, I had never heard this. And I've always been interested in the history of Asheville and I had never heard this story. Neither – I've talked to two other people, who were closer even to the bridge than I was and they never heard it either. And all of a sudden this comes up. I think this is

a very interesting story, but Asheville has enough stories, I mean real ones, we got places crawling with ghosts and we don't have to make them up. I give the boy the benefit of the doubt to say that somebody told him that story.

MP: There's more bad history being created. This I think is interesting – the title of that – I'm sure this isn't exactly what it's about – "This is a lot of bunkum" –

PG: B-u-n-k-u-m

SA: Well that's where the word came from isn't it.

(cross talk)

MP: Well it seemed to me appropriate. Of course that is the origin of the word "bunk" – I think you're right too. If only they wouldn't claim it was history. If they would own up to original authorship. Or say "I have carelessly read the facts and this my interpretation." Recently the paper's been full – If they would only just say "It seems to me this makes something good" rather than creating a history and the tragic thing is that once it's written down, then it's picked up by somebody else they say "Well I saw it in print." Well if we're going to create a new persona for the history of Asheville it ought to be done by us, and not by these people who come wandering in, floating in on their high opinion of their own creativity.

SA: I don't want to knock that whole book – there's some stories in there that are pretty good – but I never heard this, I just wonder where he got it. I've been meaning to ask you if you've heard that. I never have.

MP: Some years – no, about the time you were born, and for a few years before that, that mountainside was our playground. And if our cow got away, it went up on the mountain and people had to go up on the mountainside and down the cow. We were not at all indoctrinated with any such stories about the mountainside and felt pretty much at ease. We had friends who lived up on Oak Park Road and there was just running back and forth.

SA: It was my privilege to know the MacConochie's (?) who owned Zelandia at one time and I have never heard them mention it. Now the house was haunted, but not that bridge.

MP: By whom was the house haunted?

SA: I'm not sure. Violet MacConochie told me about their seeing ghosts. People are always me if our house is haunted. Any ghosts I have are welcome – I'd love to see them.

MP: They're lucky ghosts too.

PG: This may be a question that's too early – but for the twenties, do you remember any flappers in Asheville, and where did they dance.

MP: When the arcade was first opened they did have dances on the top.

SA: I remember that.

MP: I didn't go to them, I was treated by a dermatologist who had an office in the arcade, second floor inside. But I can remember – and probably it didn't last too long because the bank failures and the depression moved in on everything, but something called the "Watch Your Step Cabaret."

PG: It was on top of the arcade?

(C. Clifford) Mullinax Grocery.

MP: Yes. But the flappers – Jane Bingham speaks of them as “the young and laughing.” She and her sister and her mother used the country club as a kind of a baby sitter sometimes, and would park Jane and her sister Kathleen and they could watch all of the mid-1920s flirtations going on. That would have been, the first short skirts, bobbed hair. That was before Jo’s day, before my day – we unfortunately, the depression, which is such a dull period, was my age.

PG: I wanted to ask you about that too.

Jo Parker: (JP) I was thinking because Frances was too early –

MP: That’s our older sister.

JP: Her dresses and things were all much more sedate – I mean set. Marty and I came along and that Depression hit and we couldn’t do any of that.

(500)SA: I think I had cousins who were flappers during this period, but they had pretty well calmed down by time – in the depression. You know when the Citizen’s Bank failed it even got my Christmas Sock – I was about 7 or 8 years old.

PG: Can you tell me more about when the Depression hit and what you remember? Especially how your neighborhood may have been affected or your families?

SA: I know a lot of people who really did lose their shirts. My family didn’t seem to suffer quite that bad. A lot of them worked for the state, they were all politicians – they’re not going to starve you know.

MP: The one thing I remember about the neighborhood was there was still several neighborhood grocery stores. There was Mr. Mulanak’s (?) was across the street over there, and then the Charlotte Street Grocery –

PG: Would you frequent all of them or did you have one special one?

MP: Well, actually Mr. Mulanak’s and they delivered. And not only that, one time after my mother’s death, when we were keeping house and were novices, my father felt called upon to go over and lecture Mr. Mulanak “Don’t ever sell my daughters’ a tough a hen as that again.” But the thing about the Depression was, before Roosevelt and before the WPA, there were yellow barrels – now somebody in the town instituted this - in each of the grocery stores there was a yellow barrel and if you went shopping for groceries and could afford it at all, you bought one extra thing and put it in the yellow barrel. It was distributed by the associated charities.

SA: I never heard that Mary, how great.

MP: As far as the neighborhood is concerned, that’s the one thing I remember. Talking about the neighborhood groceries, that grocery store, under different management, existed up in to the 1950s. Tommy Ellington had a job – he rode his bicycle and delivered groceries. You called and if you wanted any little old thing, Tommy hopped on his bicycle – and that was as recently as the 1950s. Peggy doesn’t think that’s recent.

PG: Just barely.

SA: I always loved that idea. My grandfather didn’t die until he was 93. He was 13 when he fought in the War Between the States. He used to sit and hold forth and everybody in the neighborhood came and listened to him talk about some of those things. He was sort of the patriarch of the neighborhood. I know there was one woman that owned a house down at the end of Hollywood and she had been widowed when she was quite young and had 6 children.

MP: Couldn't have been too young I mean, 6 children took a while.

SA: Well the way she was about it, I don't think it took long. They started out on the Biltmore Estate and she was 15, I think when she married the first one. Her husband was killed and she was pretty lonesome. I remember Grandpa was the big wheel and went down when the boys got out of hand and took care of that. Now they'd have him in jail for child abuse. But Mr. Book had our neighborhood store on the corner and he had quite a – his family had certainly had a time in Europe before they came here.

PG: Where was he from Stafford?

SA: Odessa. His father I think had been a cantor and I think it was his father, either that or his uncle –

PG: He was a cantor?

SA: In the synagogue.

MP: In Russia. I think it's in Russia.

SA: He was such a great person, he and his family.

MP: Did they ^{live} near in the store?

SA: They lived up above the store. I thought it was the most fascinating apartment up there –

MP: That was on Furman?

SA: Yes, on the corner of Furman and what was then, the first time they cut a place even with College. It was just that one place about a block long. I think half the people in the neighborhood owed him money, but he carried all of them. As I say we were luckier than most. The big house was clean –

MP: And you had the orchard.

SA: Grandpa had the big back yard and the vegetables. We had a family that lived in our neighborhood then that were in terrible shape. He had been a decorator in some of the big houses here and he had 5 little girls. ^{decorator?}

MP: What was their name?

SA: Mason. And that poor man, they needed an interior decorator like a cat needed two tails–

MP: After the banks went...

SA: I do think he got out and helped Grandpa in the garden so he got some of the vegetables.

MP: The Montieth's lived up above you and their children were a lot younger than you?

SA: Some of them. There were 10 of them. Some of them were older and there were a few that were younger. There was one dear little boy, I hear from him often he lives in Galveston. He had the twins, who were the babies. And that little boy when he was about 6 or 7 himself, walked all over the neighborhood holding these toddlers by the hand. And he grew up to be a very sweet boy himself.

MP: How many of them are still around? We were talking about that some time ago.

SA: Well let's see. I can probably tell you. Bobby died, he was the oldest and he was so wonderful with his family.

WA: Is he the one that died of pneumonia?

SA: No that was Effin (?). Bobby is dead now, but he lived longer. Effin died young. Brewster is gone now, she was the oldest girl and then there was Archie.

MP: Archie would be about how old now?

SA: Younger than I. Sarah I left her out, Mary Joyce, Billy and two ~~their mother~~ had been a Henderson and I think at one time he'd been the sheriff here. Mrs. Monteth owned the house since the time she was a baby, they left it to her. It was called Rockledge, it was a big house. They had a garden, boy they were out there digging and the kids worked.

MP: Well is that house here still?

SA: No they got it when they got all my property.

WA: It would be right about where that first curve is on Town Mountain Road.

MP: Right. I remember now. Would Archie been the one who played basketball with my black friend Rodney Johnson?

SA: Well I knew Rodney he lived next door. He was a good deal younger. Rodney and my son were the same age, which is younger than Archie.

MP: There was some kids in that neighborhood though, who were among the first to integrate David Miller. Rodney's aunt was a good friend of mine and a rather conservative person. These boys had played basketball together and when it was legally possible. When they were being assigned to schools they went up to see the Board of Education and said they wanted to keep on with their ball team. They played in the backyard of David Miller before they were junior high age.

SA: My son played with Rodney all the time. His Grandmother's land joined mine. We had these great old fields. She was a lovely lady and her husband had been a bellman up at the old Battery Park. That's one reason Rodney had such lovely manners. I don't think it ever occurred to my son that there was anything strange about it, he was a little darker maybe.

(600)MP: Well all of them came from families that were pretty sure about how you behaved and expected it.

PG: You talk about walking a lot on the mountain here. I think that's something that's really changed for children today. They don't have much play space. They don't go out of their yards – if they go out in their yard. Can you tell me about how far at different ages you remember that you traveled around?

MP: We walked up on the mountain –

SA: Whole families did. Maybe you'd have 2 or 3 friends with you.

MP: Usually it was a group activity, but I don't think people were conscious of it. In fact some of the things that, in our household, you were kind of expected – partly because some of us were younger and dumber – the older ones were supposed, and they weren't crazy about having you tag along, if you went up on the mountain –

JP: That was one of the crisis in the family, was the day that –

MP: Somebody came home and left the others up there.

JP: We had a boys group and a girls group and we had a couple of wars together, chased each other around the yard. One day we had gone up on the mountain, a whole group of us –

MP: Who came home first? The boys must have come home.

JP: No we came home. And mother said, "Where are the boys?" "Oh we left them on the mountain. They're all up there playing." She said, "Go back and find..." maybe I'm doing it backwards – "Go back and find the boys" - but it may be that they came home first "You left the girls," they were all playing together up there. She said, "Don't leave anybody on the mountain. Go back and get them." And we came down the other way and when we got there Mother said "Where are the boys?" She sent both of us –

MP: To find each other.

JP: I never forgot it.

MP: The point of being, in the first place we sort of floated around the neighborhood in groups. But also, as far as playing on the mountain, it was not because of being molested or anything like that as much as it was if somebody should misstep and break a leg or sprain an ankle. You were supposed to look after each other.

PG: And the reservoirs were up there and you could just go up and play at them, I guess.

MP: The reservoirs were there but we didn't hang out around them.

SA: You remember when Town Mountain Road was just an Indian trail?

MP: Yes I do.

SA: I do very much. I think I must have been about 7 or 8, maybe 8, when this happened. Two teenage kids I was with, I think, probably early teens, boy and a girl, who were daughters of Aunt Nancy's friends or something. We walked up there, and we saw two bear cubs that looked just like teddy bears, standing in the trail. And of course I said "Here Teddy –" and started toward them. And this young man, who must have been about 13 or 14, you know an older man, said "No, no – usually where the cubs are Mama is around." You know cubs that little wouldn't be without their mother. And you know, I think I was all for bringing on the Mother. And I know that rocks started falling down from the right hand side toward – and falling in the trail. And he said "Oh my soul, here she comes." So he grabbed me and I think his sister took the other hand, and they dragged me – I kept looking back and right now I can see those cubs. They were the cutest thing. But Mama might have taken a dim view.

MP: She might not have liked that.

SA: I don't know what happened after that. We went home and told them that we saw the bear cubs on the trail up there, but I don't think any of the bigger people went up to look. But you know when Chunns Cove was just farmland in there or something, an animal could come along the mountain and come down that far without encountering too many people.

WA: Do I remember something that happened when we first came here. We walked up on the mountain and there was a little spring coming down and some kind of a little figure there?

SA: Oh it's do dear. It's where Beyond the Sky Club, later the Sky Club –

MP: I didn't know about the little figure. Was it a statue?

SA: An elf? It was an elf.

MP: Did it have to do with Mrs. –

SA: Mrs. Molly Bernally (?) –

MP: No the person who built the house that is the Sky Club. Prominent in musical circles.

JP: Mrs. – ?

MP: Yes that's the one. (laughter) Earlier I checked the date on that, there again this another very handsome, as it still is – you know it's been made into condos or something – but that house was a big handsome house built up there on the side of the mountain –

PG: The same structure? The same one?

SA: Yes. Down the bank near there, there used to be a stable. It's where Beau (?) castle is now. We used to play in that stable. Half the roof was gone and everything, but it was the dearest place. Aunt Nancy used to fuss about that because she was afraid one of us would get hurt. And speaking of stables – Zelandia stables, weren't they something? They were gorgeous.

PG: Now they weren't falling down were they? They burned.

SA: Arson. It was arson.

WA: And we knew who did it. Old Jack -?

SA: I've always thought we did. But since it's going to be recorded better not say that because we might have to prove it. But I think I do know.

MP: Well, we won't say anything more about this.

WA: Well I'll tell you this much. They had apartments upstairs and this boy – kind of a notorious thief around town, I'm not going to call names –

SA: He hit me.

WA: But he had an apartment there and they evicted him. It wasn't but two weeks till that house burned down. I'm sure burned it. Oh the stained glass and mahogany – mahogany floors in this place.

SA: My aunts talked about going up there to barn dances at this place.

PG: I'm always curious. They called it the stables but yet it had that level of interior. Was it used as a residence always too?

MP: Upstairs.

SA: And then around the back, you went around the back of it and there's were the buggies were.

MP : That was part of the Brown's original building – before the Henry's bought it. And then there was another building what really was destroyed by the open cut and that was, I believe, it was the

building in which Mr. Henry had his museum. I don't remember the structure. Walt Damtoft in that building.

SA: Three story stone. Beautiful.

MP: What I remember about it – when we were battling the open cut idea – was Col. Whatever, who lived in it at the time, trying to make people respect the blue granite fireplace.

SA: I've heard him say that a hundred times. Finally didn't he go down and hide somewhere where they couldn't serve papers on him? So he held it up for a while.

PG: So that was torn down for the open cut?

SA: Yes. There was this beautiful road up to it.

MP: That was in 1972 or 3. That's one we lost. But that was an early battle. I remember Chris Abell, who fancied himself something of a thespian, going to the hearing and saying, "I speak for the mountain," and he was impersonating the mountain, which did not want to be chopped down. Unfortunately Chris wasn't up to carrying the day. The mountain really needed more defense than that. Because there were people who kept saying "You know tunnels can be alright if properly done." The problem is that there wasn't any tunnel builder interested in the project and there were a lot of earth movers who ~~were~~.

SA: Well they made another little mountain where they dumped all there – up in Chunns Cove. And those poor people, I knew a couple of them and heard them at City meetings, who objected to all that dirt being dumped in their yards but there wasn't anything they could do about it.

PG: Well tell me, you said your family's land was affected with the first, you called it the Crosstown Expressway, is that what they called it? Not the tunnel –

MP: The Expressway, in the sixties.

SA: Well they didn't hurt it too bad. It was the end of the street. They took 2 or 3 of my neighbors.

(700)MP: You mean the tunnel?

SA: No that Crosstown Express.

WA: Well they changed Town Mountain Road when they brought in the Expressway and ran that thing right up within feet of our house. We tried to make them take it all and they wouldn't do it.

SA: We had rather nice side lawns and had original trees like you have

WA: Seventy foot Norwegian spruce.

SA: They said they would give us so many weeks to move them all – flowers, my grandmother's roses and so on – I looked out one morning and there were the dozers. And I slowly died in (?) arms.

WA: I just said you don't want to see this. We tried to fight it but it didn't do any good.

SA: Called it right of eminent domain. Miss Mary I remember when there were dear little cottages on that side there near – right across the street from you. Dr. Peacock, at one time had an office there

MP: Not quite, that was further down. The house on the corner faced Chestnut and there were two of those houses and then the Westall house. Further down Charlotte was a smaller house that was really part of the Westall property but it faced on Charlotte, our beautiful friend, Jo's contemporary, Emily Westall, who married Tony's friend Frosty Coil – lovely name – but anyway –

SA: Sounds like it ought to be in the refrigerator.

MP: Her father was Henry Westall, and they lived in that house, and her grandfather, Mr. WH –

PG: Is that next door to her parents then?

MP: No you see the Westall house was on Chestnut and it all zeroed in on the stable or the barn or whatever was in the back. The barn – the coachhouse.

JP: There were also two small houses there because one of them was where –

MP: Nell Cauble lived?

JP: Yes, Nell Cauble's house.

MP: And that's where the – for a while it was the yogurt place and I've forgotten what's there now.

(Cross talk)

SA: It was a filling station and it's been two or three other things. Somebody was murdered there.

MP: Really?

WA: During a robbery.

MP: Any time recently?

WA: About 20 years ago.

MP: That one I missed. It was a filling station?

WA: Yes, right there where Broad goes up.

SA: Tell me something. On Furman that house that was just sold for some unbelievable amount that they ^{think} Sharpe designed –

MP: Recently? Richard Sharpe Smith? Where is the house?

SA: Well if you just go straight up this – it's a vacant lot now. Was that not one time Mark Irwin's home.

MP: Yes. There was a murder in there fairly recently – just before the house was torn down.

SA: I didn't know that.

JP: It fell on hard times, the whole house.

MP: Yes the house had become a slum. That was the Furman house, then it was

END OF TAPE

Side B

PG: I think we lost a little bit of your tale at the end of this.

MP: That's alright. No great loss. But was the house of which you speak south of there? Or the other way?

WA: The red one right up here. You turn right on Furman it's the second house on the left.

MP: It's beyond –

WA: It's next to Dean's house. Between Jim and Dean.

MP: Between Jim and Laura and Dean's house?

WA: Yeah – that's right. The house in between.

MP: I think that's where Ransom Richardson's (?) –

WA: Right. It certainly was. I think of them – it's amazing how often I think of them. Do you know what became of them?

MP: Well Ransom's sister married – Sarah – married one of the Taylors. I think they go to the Episcopal Church on Mars Hill. Sarah and Ransom both had beautiful, big red-brown eyes.

SA: How many times have you had me tell you that?

WA: Many times.

SA: She's the only person I ever saw whose eyes and hair were the same color.

WA: Was she the girl who was killed in the airplane accident?

SA: No no – that's up on Oak Park.

MP: Did that house be sold for a great amount of money?

WA: Something like \$160,000.

SA: And no land, Miss Mary. I mean you'd have to walk sideways –

MP: Not only that but you would laugh - well 15 months ago, Laura and Jim Charnesky (?) had a ninetieth birthday party for a friend of ours. In the first place it was wintertime and we drove up to the Princess Anne and then got out. As we approached, there were three contemporaries, good friends of mine, approaching and all of us were so scared going up those steep steps – and there were railings but they were wobbly. You not only went up the steps from the street, but then the walk slanted and the house steps are very steep. And this group of 5 octogenarians approaching that house to celebrate a colleagues ninetieth birthday – we were scared to death. Of course Laura and Jim are kind of young compared to us, so I think they were absolutely baffled. When we got ready to leave something was said so all these nice young men – your contemporaries – each one sort of almost carried us back down those steps. And that's a delightful little house, but I can't think anything on that street is \$120,000. Or fifty or sixty or whatever.

WA: There's a little two bedroom, one bath bungalow straight across from us on Hollywood Street.

SA: Grandpa built it. My mother's honeymoon cottage.

WA: They spent a lot of money renovating it. In fact I could have built two houses from the ground up in the time they've taken to remodel this one and they've got it listed for \$98,500. It's just a tiny little house. They did put a deck on the back of it, and replace the front porch.

SA: It looks so good. They've painted it. It looks real good.

MP: Maybe you'll get some good neighbors.

WA: Well now that's two they've done. Things are looking up.

MP: Dean Nanny called this morning in somewhat alarm over some bulldozers that are opening – you know on the city plats there is a street back of the Princess Anne, between the Princess Anne and the next house. It's never been anything but a driveway or an alley, but it has access to the property – the Ingles property. Anyway Dean was very disturbed by the fact that they seemed to be opening a road in there.

SA: We're doomed.

WA: When Nick and I are out walking I've noticed there's a lot of heavy equipment, back in next to the back of the Ingles property.

(100)MP: We're going to be done in completely.

SA: You ought to see what's happening to us.

WA: You ought to see what's being built next to our back – a three story house being built 12 feet from our back line and everything on it's looking right into our back door.

SA: The Hills who were our neighbors for many years – Frank Hill, used to have a meat market up on College Street. Well they were our neighbors when I was growing up and we were pallbearers at their funerals and they were to us and they were members of All Souls. When they all died they sold the house to a lovely lady and his husband named Hall. And they just left it, the beautiful flowering trees and the Oak – they took all my gorgeous apple trees and crabapple trees and there was still one left in the Hills yard and I admired it so much. I looked out the other day and they were cutting it down. Now this Chinese gentleman -

MP: Acupuncturist –

SA: Right. At first he built one house up there on Cameron, which is just a tiny place – street about – well two cars can hardly pass. And then this thing. At first I thought they were building a skating rink. I never saw such a hole they were digging.

WA: I said they were digging a hole to China to bring his relatives up.

SA: They can't record that. But my goodness, in spite of taking up most of my land and everything I felt kind of private because there were still trees between us and the highway. Well (their) getting all those and then this great big house. I always thought of my house as being a big house – now the poor little old thing is just squatting down and this thing looming over it.

WA: It's not a terribly big house but it's terribly tall.

MP: And terribly steep.

SA: Three stories and a basement – that's a pretty good height. I could walk all over that house stark naked and nobody could see me. I'll have to get used to that.

WA: You'll have to find something else to do.

SA: I'm going to have to find something else to do.

PG: Well we'll put it officially that Stafford will not be doing that anymore – so that no one will come up there.

MP: What about the other older houses on the other side of Arlington as it turns and goes across up above you?

SA: Well the old Roger house – that's a biggie. It advertised – how many - nine acres? I said I've lived here all my life and I didn't know it was nine acres. But of course it's just like this (slanted).

PG: Is it for sale too?

SA: It's been bought by a young couple that fixed it up – it looks good. It is a pretty old house. Paneled and everything.

WA: The last people that owned it before I think had kind of cut it up into a lot of rooms. Kind of spoiled the interior of it.

JP: Is that the last one on the left as you go up the hill?

SA: Yes. There's a new little bungalow. Nancy Kern built that.

MP: But she doesn't live up there anymore?

WA: No she sold it.

SA: Nice big yard.

MP: A number of enterprising young real estate people have been interested in your corner up there.

SA: And some of them are interested in us. I don't know where we'd go – even though I've –

MP: Even though you've got to start wearing something as you walk around the house.

SA: Well I've been doing that recently Miss Mary. I don't want to shock everybody to death.

MP: Well the weather makes a difference.

SA: Especially in that old house. We've got our own deep freeze.

PG: Well I would like to ask all of you, what would you like to see the town go in the future for this kind of – where have we gone wrong, how do these projects get through with out everybody getting their input – what's a good direction for us?

MP: I don't know how you stop the DOT. You can't stop the highway department.

PG: That seems to be true doesn't it?

MP: And people who own earth-moving equipment seem to have a talent for getting the ear of the powers that be. And the pavement companies. Plus the fact that there is the mindset that regards this as a good thing. The definition of progress is really primitive so we – Stafford and I can keep opposing them and complaining –

SA: It gives us something to do doesn't it? I spoke to the town council begging them not to build anymore houses on Cameron. One of the city officials – I don't know who he was – he said "I know that street and she's right." I said "Well, one thing I'm worried about is that we have some families on Arlington, they have small children, even though they keep them up real well you can't watch a child 24 hours a day and we're getting lots of traffic on Arlington because the natives know that short cut to Town Mountain Road. So we stopped them – there was somebody who was going to build another house there, a business on Cameron. We did stop that. But I didn't have any idea that Mr. What's-His-Name build a tower.

(200)MP: But I don't think the Chinese acupuncturist is out to be a public spirited –

JP: No I'm thinking now across from Dean Nanney.

(cross talk)

WA: You don't know what's going to happen to this property where Ingles was.

MP: I think he's just perfectly happy to keep it dead.

WA: Well he can use it as a tax write off.

(cross talk)

SA: I remember the big old house that used to be there. I know they've been eyeing this place. You know when they had the big fire over there, Wynn was walking the dog. Cans started shooting through the air.

PG: I bet you were quite scared over here. I came over here and Mary and Josie were quite calm.

MP: Peggy came and Annie Lalley came.

PG: I was a nervous wreck.

MP: Peggy and Annie and Megan Gordon took water to the firemen who were using this fire hydrant. In fact they hadn't really known it was there. I think somebody had to go out and show them.

PG: We had to point it out to them.

MP: That was a scary day.

PG: We had the big tree on fire there just leaned right over the house. The other side of it was on fire.

WA: Well it didn't kill your tree.

MP: It almost did but we gave it - a really good tree surgeon came, almost immediately and shot something comparable to B12 – every few inches there was a little thing that looked from a distance like those little things that people used to put on the end of lamb chops, you know those

ruffley things – they were all around the bottom of the tree. Also a good friend who was a landscape gardener went out – sent a message - actually she was working - to tell the firemen to play the hose on the tree. Because it did kill big branches – they said if the sap had boiled it would have killed the tree, but by playing the hose on the trunk of the tree –

PG: Who knew that?

MP: Kathy. Kathy's office was in the old Mission Hospital.

PG: Kathy Davis.

MP: Yes. And Terry had come by, she sent running down the street saying "Tell the firemen to play the hose on the oak tree." That was some day.

SA: I worried a lot about you. People's taking care of you. Do you remember the Sarusfield (?) family?

MP: Knew them well. They were our next door neighbors for years.

SA: Right, the back of your house. I remember them well. Aunt Nancy evidently knew them well and we'd come down there and they'd go up to see us.

MP: He was a retired engineer and had bad health. I don't know what it was.

SA: I think cancer.

MP: Well he lived a long time. His wife taught at Cecil's Business College and they had two sons who were my brother Haywoods age. And they were wonderful big brothers, my brother Frank and Jim used to take them hiking and so forth. They were very good neighbors. Mr. Sarusfield and old Mr. Whitaker and Dad were all gardeners and they shared part of that center of the lot. They were rivals. Mr. Whitaker was – they were even older than my father who was at that time in his seventies. They tended to plant by the moon and all sorts of things and Dad was much more scientific.

SA: Plant potatoes on Good Friday. That's the only one I remember.

MP: We had wonderful gardens although.

SA: We did too. As I say some of our neighbors would have starved. But they'd come over and help Grandpa. People that had things like – interior decorators, they were in trouble - and a house full of kids - and didn't own a home – if you owned your own home it made a difference didn't it?

WA: Still makes a difference.

MP: Do you remember the Durners?

SA: I sure do.

MP: Weren't there a lot of boys that played football?

SA: There were twins – Gus and Roger and Bro – and Eddie who became a –

MP: Remember Alice in wonderland? This is her dad?

PG: Katherine Durner.

MP: Katherine – I don't know which of the boys was her father but when Bob Swicegood saw her in a play he said he'd know her anywhere, she moved just like her dad in the backfield. I never quite figured that one out. I don't know if it was Roger's daughter or which one.

SA: I don't know that generation. But every time I see on TV about twins, they're doing a lot of research now – Gus and Roger were identical twins only one of them was about 5'2 and the other was about 6'4.

(300)MP: Well that wasn't very identical.

SA: Well they were from the same egg supposedly.

MP: They were fraternal twins.

SA: They looked exactly alike.

PG: Except for their height.

SA: Yeah but one of them looked like he had his legs cut off.

WA: You do have quite the way of putting things.

PG: Stafford there was one thing I wanted to ask you about, because I used to come into your store on Wall Street - can you talk about the changes that came there on Wall Street? Was that in the seventies? In the eighties?

WA: The eighties.

SA: Well the Coxes owned the building so –

PG: How long was your store there?

SA: I had a ten year lease. My lease was up when all this started, cause I'd dragged them to court. They knew that. I ruined what – 52 people?

WA: We counted 52 people, counting all those in the CP&L building.

SA: Those are dentists and some doctors. There was a beauty parlor there that had been there for about 50 years and all the ladies went. The Reeds -

MP: What happened?

SA: The whole area was sold.

WA: They moved everybody off Wall Street to renovate it. When our lease was up they put us on month to month so they could throw us out when they wanted too.

MP: What year was that?

WA: '84.

PG: That's when Nancy would have closed her café, I guess.

SA: Well only person I know that came out – well, two people. Carolyn Smith sued. She opened an antique shop up the street from me on Wall Street. They did not tell her that she was under the gun, she came from some other place and started the store here. She sued and won.

WA: They were working on the building up above her and the plaster started falling – she had some fine glass and the ceiling plaster started falling.

SA: The rest of us they just kicked up out. I love that high tea across the street. I begged them to change the name of the place though. I got a young man in the store one time that was just raising Cain and you'd thought I owned the place – the tea room. He said that he and Bill Cecil were wondering around and having such a good time and he decided to go have a high tea – and this guy had a very British accent –

WA: Well he was a Member of Parliament.

SA: I didn't know that at the time.

MP: You mean he didn't consider it high tea when he got there?

SA: Well they were closed. They closed about the time you serve tea.

PG: That's true.

SA: And he said "I planned my whole day around this." And I said "I don't blame you being frostbitten, but I really don't have anything to do with it. And I have suggested to the girls that maybe they ought to get a different name or stay open longer or something." But I was the only one available so he took his ire out on me and we ended up just yelling at each other. So when he left he gave me this card and he was a Member of Parliament.

WA: Not only that we all know him if we do much reading his name's Jeffery Archer.

MP: Oh for heaven's sakes. They took a very civilized approach to work.

PG: They closed when the customers quit coming in.

MP: They also – during when they were open they would close for a week or so at a time. One time it was during spring break and Lula Brown wanted to take her grandchild – thought it would be such a nice place to go for a bite of lunch and whatnot. Well they were closed and when she spoke to Molly about it later Molly said "But Mrs. Brown, everybody needs a holiday." So it was a very laid-back proposition.

PG: I think it was wonderful that way. I knew them well. Wynn would close when he felt like it sometimes. He had a sign on the door one time that said "Gone Fishing" and everybody was carrying on about it saying "What is this place?"

MP: That was Wall Street in the early eighties.

SA: Oh it was great.

MP: Ann Inman had her little yarn shop in there.

SA: Well we had customers who actually wept, some of them, when we told them the street was being destroyed.

PG: It was said. *sad*

SA: I wish somebody would tell me what those things that look like dog –

PG: I think they call them bollards or something –

SA: About every two or three feet. Are we supposed to tether our goat there?

WA: Actually there's supposed to be chains draped there.

SA: Is that it?

WA: What I miss on Wall Street is those marvelous hawthorn trees.

SA: They cut down those great trees. The tourists used to just have a fit over those trees. And I never did find out what they were and one of them said, somebody asked me what that wonderful tree was and I didn't know and when they went out of the store I heard one woman say to the other "These people just don't know what's going on anywhere do they?"

MP: Remember the day they had the sheep shearing? There was one day we had a sheep shearing on Wall Street – in it's good times?

PG: Mountain festival.

SA: I remember when we had - what kind, what is it - a belly dance contest there. That got a lot of people.

MP: Who participated?

SA: It was right across the street where that restaurant was.

MP: Were you in that Peggy?

PG: No, I was not in that.

SA: When we first came to Wall Street, after the robberies in Biltmore and oh we were completely ruined and destroyed. We moved up to Wall Street and I just moved in that little bitty place, number 18, which had been kind of a craft shop, Ms. Zande (?) and her friend was in there for about 100 years.

JP: Margo.

SA: That has the little bay window –

MP: That was were Carolyn Zande and Margo –

SA: The place is mostly those big windows, now it goes all the way through but in those days it didn't. I always loved Wall Street I always wanted to move there.

(cross talk)

(400)SA: Now I remember when Watkins was up on Haywood. But you know it's so easy to make a mistake in history. There was a young man here and I loved the story he wrote on Mother. I think he's wonderful and he came out and stayed an afternoon at our house and all this.

PG: Who did he write for?

SA: For the paper.

WA: She's talking about Rob.

PG: Rob Neufeld.

SA: I tried to call him the other day and he won't answer me. But there is a thing – did you know L.B. Jackson?

MP: Sort of.

SA: Everybody sort of?

MP: Well I wasn't moving around in real estate circles.

SA: He was kind of a wild bunch. But Old Edmund(?) was a friend of my father's and my son's name is Edmund and my first husband's name was Edmund Jackson. So we know the family pretty well even though we've never been intimate with the Jacksons. There was an article in the paper on L.B. the other day and it said – now if you were just reading this cold and you didn't know the generations of the family – if you said so and so married a gentile woman – what would you think?

PG: Well I read that I wondered about that too because it didn't seem to connect with anything that had been in the article.

SA: Well you'd think that if they specified a gentile woman you'd think his father was Jewish. And I now ^{Rob} Bob is and we were talking about it and I said "So was Jesus Christ." The point is that this is not true – my son, Edmund Jackson the third. L.B.'s family were peanut farmers down in the red clay country of Georgia.

PG: Protestant I would think.

SA: I would say. I said that, I told Wynn that earthquake they thought we had the other night was L.B. rolling over in his grave.

(Cross talk)

WA: Let me show it to Stafford and see if she recognizes this woman in the striped dress.

MP: These are the pictures of Wall Street with the flowers being planted.

PG: When was this Mary?

SA: I swear I believe that's my Aunt Nancy. She was big wheel in the garden stuff.

WA: Stafford it can't be Aunt Nancy because it's '69.

SA: Could be – she'd be dead. Back to the ghost. She's in good shape isn't she?

WA: Let me look – it may be Sklomia Rice (?)

SA: Now look – if you're going to say my aunt looked like Sklomia Rice – the old woman that had re-weaving place on Wall Street. The first time somebody said "Go down to Sklomia – 'I thought it was a skin disease.

PG: An unusual name.

SA: Do you know when they started moving us out she came down and said "What's going on?" And we said "Well Ms. Rice –" She did have the cutest place up there.

PG: She was on the second floor

SA: Those offices had little fireplaces in them. And she didn't know that everybody was moving out! They had to carry her out they said.

MP: This one has Penny Cox and Margo but I don't know who that is – Now they can take pictures and put somebody in who wasn't there.

(cross talk)

SA: See this tree is so little here. When they cut it, it was a good size tree. And there was my first little place. Then we moved down – Oh I loved where we were there - we had bathrooms all over the place.

WA: We had four bathrooms in that little place –

(cross talk)

WA: You've been collecting a lot of stuff on Asheville – You have anything on World War II where there was a place on the square called Theato on the Square.

PG: Theato? What was it for?

WA: I have no idea.

PG: I think we could look it up.

WA: Look it up and see what you can find because I've got a postcard with it on it.

PG: Zoe and Ann go through the city directories and try to find out where things were and then sometimes we have clippings or photographs that help up. And that's why we're ^{doing} going these interviews because sometimes it's like an archeological dig – someone might know a clue, but the information just gets lost. I haven't heard of that.

SA: I don't remember it either but I was gone a lot during the war. I remember the oyster bar. Oh it was so popular with all the G.I.s around when there.

PG: Was that on the north side of the square?

SA: Which is the north side?

PG: Where the – you know the one they tore down.

(Cross talk)

SA: Yes it used to be. And it was upstairs. I've been there. There was a theater on the corner. The Plaza theater and next door was the Bluebird –

MP: And then the Casa Loma –

SA: Yes I've been there many times. I've got pictures of that.

MP: That's a Casa Loma chair. We owned the building and they didn't much pay the rent and when they closed up and left we went down and brought home a bunch of furniture – it was a

MP: Down Baird Street?

SA: Yes, down to Charlotte and wait on the corner there between Charlotte and Baird. I'd walk that way sometimes instead of coming up by your place, because it was a little different. Anyway there was a truck parked there, why they didn't make it move, I don't know but it was a stake bed truck. We heard "Oh Roosevelt is coming" so Jamie and I got up in the stake bed truck and the duck wanted up too, so I held him and he sat on the – I guess boy ducks are ganders – and he stood on the edge that stake bed truck. I don't know whether there was a light there then or not – but it kind of slowed the open car, it kind of slowed up –

MP: There wasn't a light there – I remember that day.

PG: Maybe he wanted to see the duck better?

SA: Well at that time I don't think he had seen the duck, I don't think – but the duck saw him. And he looked down at him when the car slowed up and said "Quack quack quack." And Roosevelt looked up and looked into my face and into my eyes, and I was what – about nine years old or so? I remember recently I read someone's supposed story when he first looked at Alexander the Great, looked at him, and it followed him till his death. I said, "Well I did the same thing with Roosevelt."

MP: Well that mesmerized you.

SA: Well when that duck looked up and said "Quack quack quack" and he looked up and smiled at the child and the duck. He looked into my eyes and his personality was almost like electric shock.

MP: That's magnetism.

PG: He was know[✓] for that.

MP: I well remember the day. I was down at the foot of the yard but I was old spinster of 21.

PG: Was he on his way to the Grove Park Inn?

SA: Coming from it.

MP: Oh he was coming back. I remember him going to.

WA: You were on the far side of the street? I always thought you were on this side

SA: I was. He didn't seem to be on one side or the other.

MP: He was right in the middle. They pretty well cleared the street. Because there folks all up and down. Fred Seely put on a dance for John Roosevelt and I don't think John Roosevelt wanted to dance but Fred Seely did so we all got all gussied up and went out.

PG: Who was John?

MP: The youngest son. That was a great day.

SA: You know all these people who were so flamboyant – they don't have anybody like that anymore. I hear the kids talk.

MP: I don't know – you don't think McCain is?

mess – but there was all this furniture and loads of B.C. headache powder. It was up on top of what had been the Bluebird Ice Creamery.

SA: I met Bob Mitchum and Keely Smith who sang, when they were making Thunder Road. This is before everybody ran around in jeans and everything and I remember Bob Mitchum was in jeans and I thought that was so unusual. I guess he just didn't care. He looked like he needed a good bath.

PG: Is the Casa Loma right there under the Plaza, going down Biltmore?

SA: No it was above the Plaza.

MP: Do you remember when part of the library was – the entrance to the Plaza, and then there were these two buildings and I'm rather confused about the chronology of this because I guess it was after the Casa Loma that Bob Williams Law Office was up there? But way back, waaay back – see that had been the site of the old Emporium that burned back in the early twenties – the Plaza entrance which was quite lengthy and grand – a promenade – on the corner was a two story shop. And then above it all there was a sign advertising Chimney Rock. For years that was our most steady income source was the rent from the sign.

PG: Did your family own those buildings? Way back to the Eagle Hotel days?

MP: Yes – that was what was left. Mr. Bamford was always a wonderful tenet and he gave us all passes to the movies – he gave everybody passes, he gave the preacher's kids and we all went to the movies all the time which was great because we didn't have 10 cents. Which is what it would have cost – or maybe when we grew up 25 cents. During the war it was the Casa Loma. And later, when Stafford hung out with Robert Mitchum that's what it was.

SA: I was at a table two or three tables from him. The only person I ever met, really famous person – I've often thought about – when we were coming from Claxton School, Roosevelt was here. And he had gone out – who was his man he came down to visit all the time here?

(500)MP: Harry Hopkins. Harry Hopkins was here when he was ill.

PG: So he came here often to visit him?

MP: Not often.

SA: Once or twice. There used to be a family named Yarrow, she was French and she lived – you remember them? She had two daughters.

MP: Oh yes – Mrs. Yarrow made hats.

SA: That's a vacant lot now – where they're talking about having the little monument thing now, at the meetings.

PG: Where are we talking about?

MP: The corner of Albermarle and Baird. The neighborhood's trying to keep it cleaned up.

SA: Well one of the daughter's went back to France right before the war and got caught there I think and had to stick it out. I can't think of the name – Jacqueline, the oldest one, that was Jamie, Jacqueline was the older one. I had started home and my people of course were all running in a circle about Roosevelt going to be here. Jamie had a pet duck that came to meet her every day on the way from school, a big fat duck would come walking down there quack, quack, quack –

SA: No I mean the people in the town like Fred and that bunch.

PG: We don't have much flamboyance?

SA: No I think you got people that make a lot of noise. I don't think they exactly back it up. I remember - who was it that went to jail because he seduced some dame here who was married to one of the Fords?

WA: Westall – Henry Westall.

MP: I don't think he went to jail for it.

SA: I'm sure he did because they brought in – some café here brought the food in all the time.

MP: That figures.

SA: They had him locked up somewhere.

MP: The loveliest story about Henry Westall was in his very old age when he was ill and in the hospital and he didn't want to stay in bed. The nurse was trying to coax him back into the room and kept patting the bed and saying "Now it's time for us to go to bed." Then she went around and he wouldn't come around and get in so she went around the other side and said "Come on now, it's time for us to go to bed." And he finally said "Well make up your mind. Which side do you want?"

SA: How great! I've heard all these stories all my life.

WA: I worked for him when I first came to Asheville, down on Coxe Avenue.

MP: He was a very imaginative, clever person.

WA: Actually I was working for Pat. You remember Pat?

MP: That was a – daughter? No, that's Emily's half sister. I never knew Pat. What was Pat's name later?

WA: Rhinehardt.

SA: Well I don't know who she's married to now, but her husband was an S.O.B. if there ever was one.

WA: I can't remember his name.

PG: Mary what have I forgotten or left out.

MP: It wasn't exactly the history that I was thinking of but it sure is good.

PG: I think it's very interesting.

SA: Well I remember when there were houses all on both sides of the street of Charlotte here.

PG: It would be beautiful.

SA: And a lot of them were quite imposing. Then one would be gone and there would be a store or something there, something through the years.

WA: Who was the original owner of the little house of the guy that used to come to the shop right when we first had the shop and he had the little house that was down below Charlotte Street? You went through a gate and stepped down into his place? Seemed like his name was Seay.

SA: And he had a wonderful old yard with old trees and old bushes and things.

MP: I think the little house was the one that had belonged to the seamstress with the wonderful name of Featherstone. Way back. But I don't know who the man was.

SA: Well this had been in his family somehow. It was a wonderful – I remember passing the house all the time in my childhood because it had a great big yard and butterfly bushes and things.

WA: His name was Seay. I can't remember his first name.

MP: Well we'll have to look in the City Directory – it's a great resource.

PG: It's amazing.

SA: Somehow a phone book fell into our hands, somebody brought it in and we bought it. It had all my gang listed – you know when there was a whole bunch of them.

MP: Old timey phone books – you know Jo was talking about that today. We still consider those old telephone numbers – ours was 968 and the Razors (?) phone number was 1. That's all you dialed. The Razor Drug Store folks.

SA: Oh really?

WA: I've got a bottle from Razor drug store.

PG: Where were they? Across the street.

SA: They were on the Square. I don't remember them.

MP: Well the Razors and the Sallys and the Plummers were all first cousins. And our phone number was 968 forever.

SA: I remember when they had me learn ours when I was a child. 2946. I remember that. Of course I don't remember any other numbers or mine right now or anything. And then finally during the Depression I think we had 2375W.

MP: I remember W and J.

PG: What was W about?

MP: Those were party lines weren't they?

SA: Yes they were party lines because I think we had the only one in the neighborhood and everybody came down and used our phone. It was nice. People felt differently about their neighbors in those days.

MP: I remember somebody telling about that and saying that the telephone was - they had a porch and there were windows into the living room or where ever but the telephone sat up on the windowsill and people could come up on the porch and use it because it was the only one in the neighborhood.

PG: Where was that?

MP: I think that was Henry Robinson's story of neighborhoods.

JP: That was down on Clingman and Park Avenue wasn't it?

MP: Might have been.

WA: Chicken Hill was an interesting place.

MO: You know they're doing some interesting things on some of those old houses now.

SA: They've got about three that I always look at -- you know when you go across the bridge. They're not very big, but they're so cute.

(600)MP: There was a story in the paper about someone was saying that like all of these neighborhoods that have been kind of run down and all in other cities -- that this had the potential for being upgraded and restored and that people would love to live there because -- it's a little far to walk up Patton Avenue, these are beyond Howard Hanger --

PG: I lived at Howard's house once and we would walk downtown -- you know you had to plan for it, sort of. It's probably as far as from here to the middle of town, wouldn't it be?

SA: Well this was just a stroll I thought. Well see it's hard to get their because of what we've been talking about - these cutoffs. You used to be able to go up here and go out Orchard street and you were practically uptown.

PG: Which way did you walk to go uptown?

MP: Usually I walked down Charlotte Street past Ms. McCorkle's house and on past the Baptist church but even before that -- you know Megan was talking about the fact, and this is almost your generation too. That we ought to talk to some people about how it was, the people who went to David Millard in the most recent years.

PG: I went there and we walked by the Pickle Barrel across the street and we'd go to Woolworth's and wait for the bus. And we would just go swarming into Woolworth's -- there were just hundreds of us in there. It must have been horrible for them.

MP: Well the downtown merchants made a big mistake - but it was a defensive move, they didn't know what to do because the kids would swarm into downtown and the Bon Marche had a candy department --

PG: It was trickier to go into Bon Marche.

MP: The candy department was right by the accommodation desk where there was a telephone and there were some steps going up around the elevator.

SA: I used to call Aunt Nancy there every day on that phone.

MP: So the kids would come in and put their books down on the steps and use the telephone and then punch a hole in one candy in a box. And that ruined it.

SA: I didn't do anything like that. They did let me use the phone.

MP: I'm sure you didn't, neither of you did that. But some people did and that was when it made the merchants so annoyed that they got into this thing of buses that did not transfer downtown. A whole generation was trained not to go downtown, and that ruined downtown.

PG: They didn't go downtown. I think it's a problem.

SA: It was hard to know what to do, wasn't it? If you wouldn't let them go to town, you lost money. If you let them in, you lost money. Kinda hard to figure it out.

MP: That's why we're all so poor today. No matter what we did we lost money.

SA: Speaking of Bon Marche – that family did so much I think so much. Mr. Lewis and Mr. – gosh I can't think of the other one's name.

MP: Mr. Morris.

SA: Morris, sure.

PG: Your aunt worked there too?

SA: Aunt Nancy at Oteen from World War I to World War II.

PG: I see you called a her from there.

SA: She was a hostess out there. And she was living – well it was a government hospital and very different from it is now. When mother died, I think she resigned this job – and this was a very good job for a woman in those days – and came home to take care of me. My grandparents were alive then. I know some of the kids have done research on mother are so surprised that families are together. That people did things like, you'd have one or two people in the family that nursed the older ones – boy we sure did in my generation. Wynn had two elderly aunts and his mother and poor baby, now he's got another one.

END OF TAPE

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February 16, 2000
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